

Oryginalna praca badawcza

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INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL SECURITY IN POLITICAL AND MILITARY ASPECTS

BEZPIECZEŃSTWO MIĘDZYNARODOWE I NARODOWE W ASPEKCIE POLITYCZNYM I WOJSKOWYM

Abstract: The article presents issues concerning the interrelationship of international and national security in the most important aspects, namely political and military. Due to the complexity of the issues the main focus is on the relationship of international security guaranteed by international organisations, selected international treaties and lasting military alliances to state security. In terms of national security, the impact of the presented international law solutions on the specific situation of European countries in the era of the ongoing Ukrainian-Russian conflict is indicated.

Zarys treści: W artykule przedstawiono kwestie dotyczące wzajemnych powiązań bezpieczeństwa międzynarodowego i narodowego w najważniejszych aspektach, a mianowicie politycznym i militarnym. Z uwagi na złożoność problematyki skupiono się głównie na relacjach między bezpieczeństwem międzynarodowym, gwarantowanym nie tylko przez organizacje międzynarodowe, ale także przez wybrane traktaty międzynarodowe oraz trwałe sojusze wojskowe, a bezpieczeństwem państwa. W ramach bezpieczeństwa narodowego zwrócono uwagę na wpływ przedstawionych rozwiązań z zakresu prawa międzynarodowego na specyficzną sytuację krajów Europy w dobie trwającego konfliktu ukraińsko-rosyjskiego.

Keywords: international security, national security, treaty, foreign policy, armed conflict.

Słowa kluczowe: bezpieczeństwo międzynarodowe, bezpieczeństwo narodowe, traktat, polityka zagraniczna, konflikt zbrojny.

The article aims to show the interrelationship of international and national security in political and military aspects. Given the significant change in US foreign policy in international relations after the US election, the goal is also to show its impact on the behaviour of other NATO allies. Previous international security achievements, particularly those developed over the years by the UN and other international organisations, are slowly beginning to be overshadowed by the policies of President Donald Trump. Showing this phenomenon is also a purpose of the article.

Security is a dynamic, ambiguous concept and multifaceted. Taking into account the functioning of state institutions and participation in the international system, the most important aspects of security for the state are twofold: political and military. Each country, functioning in the environment of other states, pursues many interests and international security occupies a special place among them. Participating in international relations, the state permanently strives to ensure and maintain an adequate level of security, thereby guaranteeing its survival and ensuring its comprehensive development. However, these activities depend on several factors, which include military considerations.

International security allows the determination of not only the external aspects of security of individual states, but primarily to describe the certainty of survival and functioning of the international system. So, it is used not only to analyse the situation of individual states, but primarily to describe the security of their collectivity, taking into account the importance of other participants in international relations.¹

State security in international relations is not a static concept, but a dynamic one, depending on certain historical, political, military or ideological conditions. These must be taken into account by states seeking to maintain international security. In other words, it is a set of measures to ensure a state's international freedom from fear, threats and aggression. In general terms, inter-

¹ R. Zięba (ed.), *Bezpieczeństwo międzynarodowe po zimnej wojnie*, Wydawnictwa Akademickie i Profesjonalne, Warszawa 2008, p. 122.

national security means the system of international relations that ensures the common security of the states that make up the international system.²

The dynamics of change in the field of international security, the evolution of challenges and threats and ways to reduce and eliminate them, changes in the mentality and expectations of citizens and rulers provide an opportunity to search for factors that affect this process. Undeniably, security is affected by the emergence of new weapons, the formation of alliances or the process of globalisation. Taking into account several such phenomena, it is possible to identify factors that shape perceptions of security. They are crucial to actors' understanding of international security. Among the factors presented by the literature on the subject, a notable one is the military aspect, the importance of which was downplayed after the end of the Cold War, but nevertheless seems to continue to play a very important role today.³ This is demonstrated by recent events in Ukraine or on the Polish-Belarusian border, which make us think about its role in contemporary international relations. Norms prohibiting the use of force alone are not sufficient here. Many security threats will require a more decisive, but precise, use of force, taking into account the capabilities of modern armed forces.

International security has a significant impact on what happens in each country. The structure of ties between countries (economic, social and historical) implies a variety of actions in each country. This was vividly confirmed by the conflict in Ukraine. The three-year war has caused most European countries to update their political and military doctrines and European governments have revised their approach to security issues. Some political decisions were made at the international level, which more-or-less resulted in subsequent decisions in individual countries. So, we can conclude that international security is undoubtedly of great importance to national security, and European countries have, for the most part, reevaluated their priorities since 2022.

In an international perspective, the security of European countries has deteriorated since the beginning of 2025 due to a dramatic change in US foreign policy. The specific security umbrella that the Americans had extended over Europe was closed. Economic interests took precedence over the common reasonably durable arrangements of the North Atlantic Pact. Because of such developments, the Western states of the Old Continent should create a separate security system as

² K. Żukrowska, M. Grącik (eds.), *Bezpieczeństwo międzynarodowe. Teoria i praktyka*, Wydawnictwo SGH, Warszawa 2006, p. 68.

³ See W. Kostecki, *Bezpieczeństwo Polski a dynamika stosunków międzynarodowych*, Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych, Warszawa 2012.

soon as possible, a system independent of NATO, but somehow parallel to the alliance. The geopolitical situation of future years may change so much that the United States will redirect its interest to China, exposing its European allies and exposing them to a clash with Russia. It is therefore necessary to quickly build common European defence structures, and perhaps return to the concept of a European Armed Forces.

Ensuring national security is undoubtedly linked to local security. Events related to the fall of “stray” missiles, or the issue of firm protection of the state border in the counties of the “eastern wall” emphatically confirm the validity of this thesis. The state responds to local security challenges by activating its capabilities at the national level. All this is intended and serves directly or indirectly the security of the citizen. This is because the state performs its tasks at the international, national and local levels fulfilling its servant role towards its own citizens. Hence, we can speak of security circles, which naturally interrelate and form a vertical and horizontal system at the same time.

Figure 1. Security circles



Source: own study.

Every state, regardless of its size or importance in the international arena, recognises security issues in the broadest sense as a priority of its policies. After all, one of the basic functions of a state is to strive (both internationally and domestically) to provide its citizens and entities operating on its territory with the broadest possible security. However, in the modern world, effective minimisation of threats can only be achieved in the framework of international cooperation, since “no single state can face modern complex threats alone.”⁴

⁴ C. Mojsiewicz, W. Malendowski (eds.), *Stosunki międzynarodowe. Praca zbiorowa*, Wydawnictwo Atla 2, Wrocław 2004, p. 243.

International security in military terms encompasses a variety of issues related to maintaining peace and stability globally and regionally through military action and military strategies. There are several key areas in this regard. Military alliances, such as NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization), play a key role in shaping international security. Article Five of the treaty states that any armed attack on one of the member states will be treated by the other states as an attack on themselves, and in such a situation each member of the alliance will assist the attacked party by taking such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force. NATO's actions constitute an important military aspect of international security, not least because of its shared military resources and by enabling its members to use them. These include military bases, defence technologies and armed forces that are interoperable, meaning they can work together in joint military operations. Regular joint exercises and training increase combat readiness and the ability to respond quickly to threats. This provides greater efficiency and defensive power than if countries acted alone. In addition, advanced military technologies act as a deterrent against potential aggressors, which significantly improves the defence capabilities of member states.

NATO promotes international security cooperation, which contributes to better coordination of activities and information exchange among member states. This, in turn, enhances the effectiveness of defence and prevention activities. Through all of these elements, NATO plays a key role in ensuring security and stability on the international stage, acting as a foundation for common defence and deterrence against potential threats.

An important organisation influencing international security is, for example, the United Nations (UN), whose main purpose is to maintain international peace and international security, respect human rights, improve living standards and promote social progress. The UN Security Council can decide on military interventions, sanctions and other measures to prevent armed conflict and maintain peace by conducting peacekeeping missions to stabilise conflict-affected regions, protect civilians, provide humanitarian aid and prevent massive human rights violations. Conventions and treaties, such as the UN Charter, the Geneva Conventions and Security Council resolutions, form the legal basis for international security activities.

The UN is also working to reduce arms and arms control. Examples include international treaties such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the activities of the Committee on Disarmament to prevent arms escalation and promote disarmament. The UN supports member states in

building defence and security capabilities through training, advisory and technical programs. This support contributes to enhancing the ability of states to ensure internal and regional security. In addition, it plays an important role in the global fight against terrorism by coordinating international efforts, creating legal norms and supporting states in developing counter-terrorism strategies. Through these activities, the UN is a key aspect of the international security system, promoting peace, stability and cooperation on the global stage.

Balancing armaments and disarmament initiatives are key to maintaining stability. Negotiations on the reduction of nuclear arsenals, such as START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty)⁵ between the US and Russia, are examples of efforts to reduce arms capabilities. International cooperation on arms control is aimed at preventing an arms race and increasing transparency and trust between states. The New START, signed in 2010, is the current treaty between the US and Russia. The treaty commits each side to limit the number of deployed strategic nuclear warheads to 1,550 and the number of ballistic missile, bomber and submarine-launched launchers to 800, of which only 700 can be deployed. The new START also introduces strict verification mechanisms, including inspections and data sharing, to ensure compliance with its provisions. Negotiating the reduction of nuclear arsenals has several key benefits for maintaining international security:

- reducing the number of nuclear warheads and their means of delivery reduces the risk of accidental or inadvertent use of nuclear weapons and potential escalation of conflicts,
- these treaties and related verification mechanisms help build trust between nuclear powers, which is crucial for strategic stability,
- reductions in nuclear arsenals by the major nuclear powers set an important example for other countries, which can encourage them to take similar steps and strengthen global non-proliferation regimes,
- the START treaties and similar initiatives promote the idea of global disarmament and support international efforts to create a world free of nuclear weapons.

These treaties are very important for international security and the maintenance of global peace and stability, as the reduction of nuclear arsenals and the

⁵ Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I) – the first of the “strategic arms reduction treaties,” part of the START series, concluded between the United States and the Soviet Union. It was the first US-Soviet international agreement on the reduction of strategic nuclear weapons. It was signed in Moscow on 31 July 1991.

reduction of nuclear risks are key to preventing disasters with unimaginable consequences.⁶

Modern military technologies have a significant impact on international security, affecting defence strategies, conflict dynamics and the balance of power. Technological advances are influencing the nature of modern conflicts, which combine conventional military operations with cyberattacks, disinformation and other forms of irregular warfare, thereby challenging traditional security structures.⁷

Cyber security is becoming an increasingly important element of countries' defence strategies. Today's computer and Internet technologies are introducing new threats in the form of cyber attacks that can cripple critical infrastructure, energy, communications and financial systems. Cyber warfare is becoming a key component of defence strategies and protecting against cyber attacks is a priority for countries around the world. Artificial intelligence and robotics are revolutionizing the battlefield with the introduction of autonomous drones, vehicles and defence systems. AI can analyse real-time data, optimise military decisions and predict enemy movements, making military operations more efficient. Autonomous systems can perform high-risk missions without risking human life.

Satellite technology is crucial for communications, navigation and Earth observation. Satellites provide vital intelligence, monitor troop movements and enable global communications. The increase in military use of space is also leading to competition in this new operational domain. Advanced defence systems, such as missile shields, are capable of detecting and neutralising threats in real time. These systems use advanced radar, satellite and computer technology to track and destroy incoming missiles and other threats.

Advances in biotechnology can have both positive and negative consequences. Military medicine can benefit from new therapies and technologies, but there is also a risk of using biotechnology to create biological weapons. The impact of modern military technologies on international security is twofold. On the one hand, they can enhance defence and deterrence capabilities, contributing to stability and peace. On the other hand, the introduction of new technologies can lead to an arms race, escalation of conflicts and new forms of threats. Therefore,

⁶ See A. Hernandez-Polczyńska, *Procedury specjalne Rady Praw Człowieka ONZ*, Wydawnictwo Instytutu Nauk Prawnych PAN, Warszawa 2019.

⁷ S. Koziej, *Rozważania o bezpieczeństwie*, vol. 1, Oficyna Wydawnicza Uczelni Łazarskiego, Warszawa 2016, p. 144.

international cooperation and regulation are key to managing these technologies in a way that promotes global security.

International security, in its military aspect, is an essential element of international relations, and its provision requires action for the peaceful settlement of international disputes, the establishment of legal and institutional bases for stability and cooperation. The essential function of international security is institutionalised action for peace, stability and the development of states and societies locally, regionally and globally. This must be a coordinated collective action, as even the most powerful powers cannot guarantee international peace and order on their own.

In the 21st century, the quest for sustainable peace and security must constantly reconcile the diverse needs, interests and objectives of an exponentially growing number of actors in international relations. This leads, on the one hand, inevitably to an increase in challenges, threats, tensions and conflicts in the modern world and, on the other hand, to collective efforts that take the form of institutionalised interaction between organisations, alliances and other international structures created to address and overcome these threats.

The current phase is characterised by a variety of phenomena and factors determining the state of security, many of which are unpredictable. The hitherto international order was based on a system of balance of power based on the desire to increase the power of states, while assuming the flexibility of alliances to balance the power of states with opposing interests. The constant interplay of interests, above all of the great powers, as well as the awareness of the achievability of intended political and economic goals through war, has the effect of destabilising the international order and shaping a lasting sense of insecurity. If the current phase of the formation of a new international order continues for an extended period, the role of the superpowers and their activity will be increasingly dependent on the support of all states participating in the creation of security.

Two phenomena in the international order that were developed in the 20th century have become the basis for the construction of the current international security system. The first is based on the prohibition of force in international law and the settlement of disputes by peaceful means.⁸ The second is based on

⁸ The Briand-Kellogg Pact, also known as the Pact of Paris, an international treaty establishing the renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy. It was proposed in 1927 by Aristide Briand, the French Foreign Minister, as a treaty between the United States and France, prohibiting war between the two countries. It was an attempt to integrate the United States into the French security system. Frank B. Kellogg, the US Secretary of State,

the assumption that the strength of peaceful states would fundamentally outweigh the strength of a potential aggressor or aggressors who intended to violate the principles of collective security. An example of a violation of this principle would be Russia's aggression against Ukraine in February 2022.

In conclusion, international security in military terms is a complex and multi-dimensional issue that requires coordinated action on many levels. Military alliances, control of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, peacekeeping operations, arms reduction, the fight against terrorism, the adaptation of modern technologies and the pursuit of regional stability are key elements of strategies to maintain peace and security in the world.

Throughout history, security has been based primarily on military power. It has been the basis for the security of empires, kingdoms, principalities and later nation states. The building of military power has also been subordinated to such important areas as natural resources, demographic potential, scientific and technological progress, etc. The apogee of this phenomenon came during the two world wars in the 20th century, followed by the bipolar system of world order, characterised by the arms race and the Cold War. Its disintegration meant the 'unfreezing' of the multifaceted needs and interests of nation states, the re-emergence of old problems and conflicts as well as new forms and types of threats.

Indeed, these have materialised not so much externally as internally. The likelihood of large-scale conflicts has decreased, while the threat of internal disputes of an ethnic, cultural or religious nature has increased. The effect of these changes was a redefinition of threats, which shifted the focus from classic military threats, occurring mainly in the form of military aggression, to non-military threats. The time when the very understanding of security was reduced to traditional ways of countering military threats and developing military capabilities also came to an end. As a consequence, there has also been a redefinition of the concept of state power, which is no longer seen primarily from a military point of view. New non-military threats penetrated all spheres and areas of state activity, pushing the military security dimension into the background. Alongside defence, a broader term – security – began to be emphasised as more relevant to existing and emerging threats and challenges.

Thus, one might get the impression that, nowadays, military power has ceased to play an important role in states' security policies and strategies. Despite

responded with a proposal for a multilateral pact to reject war as an instrument of policy making. Kellogg's proposal was accepted by Briand.

changes and revaluations, the priority of military security, concerning the integrity and sovereignty of nation-states, remains unchanged both in strategies and in practical political activity. It is therefore worth tracing how the issue of military security has been framed in the work and results of the Strategic National Security Review, which is the culmination of nearly two years of work devoted to a systemic and integrated assessment of the state and future of international and national security. The review leads to a presentation of how the following issues have been covered in the review: the nature of anticipated military threats; the concept of the use of the Polish Armed Forces in the event of a threat to the security of the state by armed aggression; the development and technical modernisation of the military; the state of Poland's defence preparations and the improvement of the defence subsystem.

It is generally accepted that military threats are characteristic of national security. National security encompasses the use or threat of the use of military force by subjects of international law (states). This thesis is verified to some extent by terrorist attacks and the ability of non-state structures to use armed violence to achieve their own ends. In this context, the concept of military threat implies the real possibility of armed violence.

In the traditional view, a military threat is seen as the most serious threat to state security and is understood most generally as a potential or existing danger of armed violence – directly or indirectly – against national values and national interests. There are many examples in history of the direct and indirect use of armed violence as a tool to achieve political objectives. These include: demonstration of force; diversion, military blockade and provocation; military blackmail; border incident; limited use of armed violence; armed border clash; armed assault by informal groups, local or inter-state conflict. Another important feature of military threats is that they are derivative of problems and threats arising or anticipated in other spheres and policy areas. Failure to resolve emerging problems, contradictions and tensions on political, economic or social grounds can lead to the emergence of military threats. However, this is not a necessary condition. Instead, a necessary condition for their emergence is a political decision resulting in the use of armed force (armed violence), hence such threats are often referred to as political-military. It is also considered that the source of military threats is not only the military potential of other states or non-state organisations and the possibility of its aggressive use, but also one's own military weakness provoking opponents to violence. Countering this form of violence is the domain of defence (defensive) policy. Its essence is to maximise the chances

of preserving the existence of the state under military threats and, further, to optimise the functioning of the state in all areas of its activity. Defence therefore encompasses the activities of the entire state, and essentially boils down to countering military threats and mitigating or neutralising their effects using all available instruments, tools and means. Accordingly, defence is not just an area of activity for the armed forces, although it is often and quite commonly perceived as such. This is due, *inter alia*, to the fact that under conditions of a military threat to security, armed forces often become one of the ultimate instruments of defence policy and armed combat its primary means. This is especially the case when the use of other tools proves pointless, impossible or ineffective and the state cannot give up the pursuit of a strategic objective, postpone it or lower the requirements necessary to achieve it. Military security is equated with defence.

In the context of Polish interests in Europe, the primary and multilateral external guarantor of Poland's security remains the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. In the forum of the alliance it is particularly important for Poland to ensure an equal level of security for all its members, the effectiveness of NATO's multinational command system, automatic action in the event of threats, combat readiness of the air defence system, the development of the continental missile defence system and the strengthening of rapid response tools. Another Polish strategic priority, and the second external security guarantor after NATO, is the development of the EU Common Security and Defence Policy. From the point of view of Polish interests, it is important that the development of the CSDP is harmonised with the allied system and does not undermine either NATO's role in the European security system or the US military position on the European continent. Furthermore, from the point of view of Poland's interests, it is particularly important – in addition to maintaining a significant US presence in Europe – that the United States plays an active and leading role in NATO: engaging in maintaining the balance of power in the European theatre and participating (alongside NATO) in guaranteeing Poland's security. Moreover, given Russia's superpower ambitions and its desire to transform Europe's security system into a kind of informal concert of powers, Poland's security policy aims to effectively counter Russian influence in Europe.

In today's world, especially with the rise of asymmetric threats, the armed forces are used not only to counter external threats, but also in terms of internal security. As stated in the National Security Strategy, activities in the military sphere are aimed at maintaining and demonstrating the state's comprehensive readiness to respond effectively to military threats to Poland's independence

and territorial integrity. Tasks in this area are performed primarily by the Polish Armed Forces, which are ready to perform three types of missions: guaranteeing the state's defence and resisting armed aggression; supporting protective sub-systems in the field of internal security and assisting society; participating in the process of stabilising the international situation, including international crisis management activities.

The state's defence mission also includes performing a military deterrence function by demonstrating readiness to defend itself with forces maintained in peacetime and readiness to mobilise them in the event of war. The legal aspects of military security can be found in a great many regulations of international law, e.g. the scope of authorisation to use military force, restrictions on the use of military force or measures to restore military security (including, inter alia, the obligation to protect non-combatants). In turn, national regulations on military security consist of defence law and military law.

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Summary

In conclusion, therefore, it can be said that national security is one of the key elements in the functioning of a state, ensuring the viability and development and the freedom to pursue national interests. It is linked to international security. It is based on a coherent policy of allied states. It must furthermore take into account the financial aspect, which

is one of the pillars of international security. A state cannot and should not base the security of its citizens solely on international treaties or assurances of external assistance. This is because the military security of a state depends on many variable economic and, of course, political factors.